

State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies Department of Defense Role

Under the Congressional requirements of the relatively new **State and Tribal Wildlife Grant Program**, all state fish and wildlife agencies must submit a *State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan* or *Strategy* **by October 1, 2005** to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These strategies will provide an essential foundation for the future of wildlife conservation and a stimulus to engage the states, federal agencies and other conservation partners to strategically think about their individual and coordinated roles in prioritizing conservation efforts in each state and territory.

Who is developing the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies?

Primary responsibility for managing wildlife has always rested on States. They have the leadership role in writing the *Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies*. However, in the development and implementation of these strategies, Congress requires the States to collaborate with "Federal, State, and local agencies and Indian tribes that manage significant land and water areas within the state or administer programs that significantly affect the conservation of identified species and habitats". Since many states contain significant Department of Defense (DOD) land, the need for communication and cooperation between the State fish and wildlife agencies and the DOD is critical.

What will a State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy look like?

Each Strategy will present a vision and a course of action for wildlife conservation at the State level. While each State fish and wildlife agency is leading the strategy development process, the aim is to create a strategic vision for conserving and sustaining the state's wildlife, not just a plan for the State fish and wildlife agency itself. Relationships established through this effort will enable DOD wildlife professionals to share their wildlife data and knowledge with other partners. Potentially, these plans could provide strategic direction to future wildlife conservation work on DOD lands, and also may be a conduit for identifying funding sources for some conservation actions (e.g. population surveys, research, restoration of habitat, etc.).

When will the Strategies be completed?

Each state Strategy is scheduled to be completed by October 1, 2005, with a planned review no less often than every ten years. Many states are already working to ensure that their Strategies will be reviewed more regularly to ensure adaptive management and conservation success over the long term.

What makes these Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies unique?

The availability of funding and the scale of this endeavor make the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies different from any of the other scores of plans that have been drafted in the past. To ensure their implementation, most of the priority conservation actions described within each Strategy will be able to be executed with appropriated State Wildlife Grant funds, matched with nonfederal support. In addition, the Strategies are being produced by every state and territory to address the broad range of wildlife diversity and habitats across the country. Collectively, they will create a nationwide vision for the future of wildlife conservation.

Who should the DOD Contact to engage with the State fish and wildlife agencies in the development of the States' Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plans?

- A list of State Plan Coordinators can be found at this site: http://editor.quilldesign.com/teaming/pdf/CWCS%20Contacts.pdf
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Assistance Point Persons:

Region 1: Verlyn Ebert (503) 231-6128; <u>verlyn_ebert@fws.gov</u> States and Territories: American Samoa, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Northern Marianas, Oregon, Washington

Region 2: Bob Anderson (505) 248-7459; bob_anderson@fws.gov States: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

Region 3: Mike Sweet (612) 713-5129; <u>mike_sweet@fws.gov</u> States: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin

Region 4: Nicole Jimenez (404) 679-7058; <u>nicole_jimenez@fws.gov</u> States and Territories: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, U.S. Virgin Islands

Region 5: John Organ (413) 253-8501; john_organ@fws.gov
States and D.C.: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland,
Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island,
Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

Region 6: Amelia Orton-Palmer (303) 236-8179; amelia_orton-palmer@fws.gov States: Colorado, Kansas, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

Region 7: (Anchorage); Al Havens (907) 786-3435; <u>alan_havens@fws.gov</u> State: Alaska

Washington Office: Tim Hess (703) 358-1849 and Genevieve Pullis LaRouche (703) 358-1854; <u>tim_hess@fws.gov</u> and <u>genevieve_pullis@fws.gov</u>